(v) Horticulture and Public Gardens

1038. The Mysore Horticultural Department continued its activities connected with fruit culture, vegetable culture and floriculture, introduction, acclimatisation and propagation of other economic and ornamental plants and improvements of ornamental gardens, both floral and landscape.

1039. The Department is doing its best to increase the fruits and vegetable wealth of the State. The activities of the department consist in the selection of suitable lands for opening new gardens, in the cultivation of fruits and vegetables and in the treatment of plant pests and diseases. The district staff also supply genuine plants and seeds propagated in the District Horticultural Farms and teach horticultural crafts to the people. A practical approach to the development of horticulture in rural areas is being taken and to educate the public, the fieldmen of the department attached to villages or organised bodies impart horticultural knowledge to them.

1040. Horticultural farms were functioning in four out of nine districts. Nurseries are attached to these farms where plants and seeds are propagated for distribution in the respective districts.

1041. The management of the Bungalows at Kemmangundi Hill Station together with staff attached to bungalows was transferred to the Mysore Iron and Steel Works, Bhadravati. The maintenance of fifty private gardens together with the staff belonging to the Mysore Palace, Mysore was handed over to Palace management from 1st February 1954.

1042. This garden has maintained its reputation aso ne of the most important botanic gardens in the East. It has maintained its reputation as the beauty spot and recreation grounds. The botanic garden serves to stimulate and create the interest of gardening in the minds of the public. Horticultural Shows are held annually twice in the Glass House of Lalbagh exhibiting the popular and rare varieties of flowers which are of high educative value. Lalbagh, Bangalore,

1043. The Lalbagh, Bangalore, is the centre of all horticultural works in the State. The introduction of plants generally and economic plants in particular from both in

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and abroad, their acclimatisation and propagation and distribution is an important function of this garden. This garden is an important centre for diffusion of popular, technical and scientific information about plants. As a measure to popularise the science of horticulture, a free horticultural training course was started in Lalbagh. The tuition is imparted to the students and more than 100 students underwent training during the year. The garden has been increasingly valuable as an adjunct or supplement to the natural and botanical study by the local schools and colleges and by the public.

1044. The department took part in the Evening Flower Shows held at Olympia, London, during August 1953.

1045. Fieldmen belonging to the Horticultural Department were deputed to the Lalbagh Botanical Gardens from various districts to undergo intensive training in practical horticulture. Three hundred and forty-two persons and institutions have availed of the opportunity of receiving plants and seeds for Vanamahotsava and rural development.

1046. The botanical garden, Lalbagh, participated in both the Winter and Summer Horticultural Shows and bagged the First Prize in both the Shows.

1047. Technical advice and considerable amount of valuable information of a miscellaneous nature covering such subjects as botanical, economic plants, medicinal, horticultural, agronomy, etc., was continued to be given to a wide circle of public as well as Government and public institutions. In many cases the gardens were visited by the technical staff and proper advice was given on laying out, maintaining, pest control, selection of plants, culture, etc.

Koramangala Farm.

1048. This farm is the chief centre of vegetable cultivation. It is also a trial ground for the performance of new varieties of vegetable seeds imported from in and abroad. Both European and Indian vegetables were grown and sold. New varieties of vegetable seeds imported from America, Holland, Nilgiris, etc. were tried in the farm. The vegetables grown in the farm were exhibited in Horticultural Shows and in the Evening News Flower Show held at Olympia, London.

Hill Stations.

1049. The Nandi Hill Station continued to attract the visitors and maintained its reputation as one of the popular

summer resorts in South India. Mahasivarathri Jatra was held during the year during which time thousands of pilgrims visited the Hills.

1050. Sri Krishnarajendra Hill Station, Kemmangundi is also becoming popular as a summer resort in the State.

(vi) Stores Purchase Committee

1051. The total value of orders placed (including the annual rate contracts) with firms in India during the year amounted to about Rs. 2,28,63,263 (Rs. 1,33,78,950). The total value of orders placed with firms in foreign countries amounted to Rs. 29,32,494 (Rs. 44,00,496). The total value of all purchases arranged by the Stores Purchase Committee both from firms in India and foreign countries during the year amounted to Rs. 2,57,95,758 (Rs. 1,77,79,447). The fluctuation in prices of almost all materials continued as in the previous years owing to Armament and Stock Piling Programme of various countries. The number of ex-stock offers were few. The tendency towards enhancement of prices and delays in delivery continued and the prices quoted by foreign firms were not firm and were always subject to change at the time of actual despatch depending upon the cost of material and labour at the time. Most of the requirements of Government departments were met by indigenous firms.

1052. Since the services of Messrs. Rendel Palmer and Tritton Ltd., London have been terminated, no expenses were incurred on behalf of the establishment of the Stores Purchase Committee.

1053. The total expenditure of the Stores Purchase Committee including the contribution of Rs. 4,000 paid to the Mysore Trade Agent's Office in London amounted to Rs. 50,690 (Rs. 61,439) and the incidence of cost works out to ·19 per cent as against ·25 per cent in the previous year. The sale proceeds of the Tender Forms during the year amounted to Rs. 29,862 (Rs. 22,533).

1054. Messrs. Best & Co., Ltd., Madras continued to be the clearing and forwarding agents. The total tonnage of consignments imported and exported by the agents during the year was 7,805½ as against 5,178½ during the previous year. The total expenditure incurred for the